

DR. BRUCE STANNERS  
1415 1<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE WEST  
SUITE 2000  
OWEN SOUND  
N4K 4K8  
(519) 470-3030  
FAX (519) 370-4051

Hon. Christine Elliot MPP  
Minister of Health,  
80 Grosvenor Street,  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 2C4

January 31, 2021

Dear Minister Elliott,

I am a family physician in Owen Sound. I have been practicing since 1984. Over the years, I have seen patients in our private offices, on house calls, in an emergency room, as inpatients in several hospitals, and in the last few years, in Chapman House Hospice.

The EPIC program I believe started here in 2015 as part of a study with St Michael's Hospital to better assess and care for some chronically ill patients. As you are aware, inclusion criteria to the program, to this point, have included patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and/or Congestive Heart Failure and/or Diabetes.

I have been so impressed with this program over the years, and have expressed my thanks and respect to the members of this team frequently. This team makes scheduled calls or they make urgent visits when they get called by the patients themselves. Typically in my experience, after a thorough assessment, the attending paramedic texts and then calls to talk to me about the condition of the patient. They are able to examine patients, they can treat patients with COPD who may need nebulizer therapy, they can check blood sugar levels, and in rare circumstances, they can do venipunctures for blood tests to go to the lab when time is important. They have a selection of medications, such as antibiotics which can be started on our direction, and then a prescription for follow up treatment is sent to an appropriate pharmacy by us. They also can do immunizations.

This programs helps in many ways. It helps patients to get quick and appropriate care. It helps physicians in having our patents appropriately cared for, in such a way that not even we can adequately do at times as we don't have the equipment or resources to do in home emergency care. It helps the overall system, by allowing patients to stay at home and not having to go to an emergency room for immediate care.

More in house care for patients is done by home care visitations through the LHIN but again, the degree of assessment, level of care, and communication to us by the EPIC members far exceeds typical home care. The paramedics have access to our electronic medical records and so we can discuss past and present issues together over the phone.

I knew that changes to the program were being proposed in my discussions with the paramedics recently, but it is official in the media now so I thought I would write to you. I think the idea of expanding care through the Ministry of Long Term Care will be excellent. I believe this will assist all involved in care of patients waiting for admission to long term care facilities who are still living in their primary residences.

As I mentioned, I have seen patients needing care, in numerous settings, under many circumstances. As a practicing family physician, I believe the EPIC program is excellent and is one of the best components of our health care system.



Bruce Stanners MD, FCFP, Dip Sport Med

Cc

Hon. Marilee Fullerton MPP  
Minister of Long Term Care,  
400 University Avenue,  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1T7

Hon Bill Walker MPP  
Associate Minister of Energy,  
77 Grenville Street,  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 2C1

Mr Selwyn Hicks  
Warden Grey County,  
595 9<sup>th</sup> Ave East,  
Owen Sound, ON  
N4K 2E3

Mr Kevin McNabb,  
Director of Paramedic Services, Grey County  
595 9<sup>th</sup> Ave East,  
Owen Sound, ON  
N4K 2E3